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looked upon as the founder of a largely conceived Religionswissenschaft. The programme of this conception is outlined with splendid enthusiasm and grasp in the essay entitled *Mythologie* (of the year 1904), which is probably the most important of the papers making up this volume. In general it is to be said that those studies which touch upon the central intents of his later years seem the most vital and significant. Two of the longest, *Philologie und Geschichtswissenschaft* (1882) and *Organisation der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit* (1884), attracted much attention at the time of their appearance, but they have not the present vitality of the religious and mythological themes. In the early eighties, when the academic lecture course on "Encyclopädie und Methodologie" was still in full vigor, the effort to define classical philology and to differentiate it from historical science was a livelier topic than it is today. Usener's treatment of the problem and his solution of it was once revealed gospel for his pupils, and certainly no one can now read it without much clarification of thought. But time and resignation in the undefinable have robbed it of something of its pristine brilliancy.

Taken all in all the *Vorträge und Aufsätze* form a volume of remarkable interest, which must prove fruitful and stimulating not only through its positive content, but also for the example of method and presentation which it affords. Those who knew Usener as a man between fifty and sixty years of age will find the portrait, which forms the frontispiece, at once characteristic and disappointing. One may conjecture that the affliction of partial blindness caused a contraction of eyes and brow in his later years, which at least in the representation here given has robbed his face of that largeness and nobility of expression, combined with a flashing eye, which no one of his pupils can forget.

G. L. HENDRICKSON

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*The Deification of Abstract Ideas in Roman Literature and Inscriptions.* By HAROLD L. AXTELL. Chicago dissertation. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1907. Pp. 100. 75 cents.

This study is divided into two parts. In the first Dr. Axtell considers the deified abstracts as individual cults under the following heads: (1) state-cults, (2) abstracts popularly but not officially worshiped, (3) occasional and individual deifications, and (4) doubtful examples; in the second part he deals with the deified abstracts as a class, and treats them as to (1) their origin, (2) their mention in literature, and (3) their appearance in inscriptions.

The most important part of this dissertation is the discussion (pp. 59-67) of the origin of abstract deifications, in which the author takes reasonable issue with certain current notions. On the question of origin

scholars are divided into two parties: one, to which Mommsen and Boissier belonged, maintains that the conception of abstract divinities belonged to the oldest stages of Roman religious thought; the other, of which Wissowa is today the most eminent representative, holds that the early Romans did not deify either the powers of nature or ethical concepts, but rather that the abstract divinities arose fairly late, and that they owed their being to the detachment of epithets from a few chief gods, as, for example, Victoria, who is thought to have sprung from a Jupiter Victor, Fides from Jupiter Fidius, etc. Between these two views Axtell wisely takes a middle position. He points out on the one hand that the early Romans of the agricultural stage had already deified certain *res expetenda*, such as Ops—"the abundance of grain"—and probably Bonus Eventus. This view is supported by the practice of other Italian peoples, for the Sabines worshiped Salus, at the Umbrian town of Ocricum there was a cult of Valentia, and the Latins themselves worshiped Fors Fortuna. On the other hand, Axtell grants that certain abstract deities were probably derived from epithets. e. g., Iuventas and Libertas; but the derivation of Fides from an epithet of Jupiter he is inclined to doubt, objecting that the theory of such origin depends wholly on the fact that the three chief *flamines* took part annually in her worship and on the proximity of her temple to that of Jupiter; but these he does not regard as cogent reasons for the view of Wissowa and his school. His protest against the excessive use of similarity in dates of festivals and of temple foundations to establish relationships between divinities is also timely and well made.

The rest of the dissertation is not so important. The list of abstract divinities in the first part is useful, but adds little or nothing to the knowledge we already possessed. One point, however, deserves favorable mention. By a clever combination of Ovid *Ex Ponto* iii. 6. 23-26 with a notice in the *Fasti Capitolini* Axtell fixes with great probability the date of the dedication of the temple as well as the statue of Iustitia as January 8, 13 A. D. But the greater part of the author's remarks on the several divinities are only repetitions of material found elsewhere. We must regret that he did not give more attention to Deubner's article on personifications in *Roscher's Lexikon* and to certain other studies. Furthermore, in dealing with the testimony of Latin literature it would have been well to abandon the chronological order for one based on relative importance; and finally, although the writer avowedly omitted coins from his sources, it must be recognized that no study of this subject can be satisfactory which disregards them. Yet, after all these reservations have been made, the dissertation remains a creditable piece of work.

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